requested by MCL to close down all licensed coal depots (Licenses issued by the State Government authorities) near mines/pit heads. The existence of such coal depots near mines/pit heads is the main cause of pilferage of coal. No license is now being issued to coal depots within a radius of 45 kilometers of the coal mines.

(ii) Coordination is being done by MCL with the civil authorities including police. A strategy is being formulated to prevent theft/ pilferage of coal. Extensive mobile patrolling by the security personnel of MCL as well as by the police is being carried out regularly.

Fire accident in Moira Colliery of ECL

1088. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) Whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item regarding Fire accident in Moira Colliery, under ECL, West Bengal appearing in 'Ganashakti' dated the 12th July, 2000;

(b) If so, the action taken by Government to restore the situation; and

(c) the expected loss due to that accident?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Fire area has been sealed off on 17.7.2000 and production has been restored from 18.7,2000.

(c) Expected loss due to the accident is Rs. 32.50 lakhs.

Coal Production Capacity of Mines

1089. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the coal production capacity of various coal mines and the actual production therein during the last three years; and

(b) what steps are being taken by Government to increase existing production of coal in the country?